

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.
2. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Gary J. Gershik on 7/13/2011.

3. IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 120, 121, 124, 125, 128, 130, 132, 134, 138, 140-142 have been canceled.

--117. (Currently amended) A method of increasing fibre initiation and/or elongation in a fibre producing plant comprising ~~genetically manipulating~~ introducing into the plant a nucleotide sequence encoding such that the production of a polypeptide comprising consecutive amino acids whose sequence is identical to the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 38, such that the production of the polypeptide is increased when compared to a wild-type fiber producing plant, wherein the nucleotide sequence had been previously isolated.--

118. (Currently amended) A method of reducing fibre initiation and/or elongation in a fibre producing plant comprising ~~genetically manipulating~~ introducing into the plant an antisense polynucleotide or a polynucleotide that produces a dsRNA molecule such that the production of a polypeptide comprising consecutive amino acids whose sequence is identical to the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 38 is reduced when

compared to a wild-type fiber producing plant, wherein the polynucleotide sequence that produces the dsRNA had been previously isolated.--

--122. (Currently amended) The method of claim 118[[121]], wherein ~~the genetic manipulation is exposing the plant to the dsRNA molecule and~~ the dsRNA molecule is double-stranded over at least 19 basepairs whose sequence corresponds to a consecutive sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 38, or to a consecutive sequence which is identical to the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 38.--

--126. (Currently amended) A substantially purified and/or recombinant ~~polypeptide selected from the group consisting of a~~ polypeptide comprising consecutive amino acids whose sequence is set forth in SEQ ID NO: 12.—

--129. (Currently amended) A vector comprising ~~or encoding~~ the polynucleotide of claim 127.—

--133. (Currently amended) A transgenic plant which comprises the exogenous polynucleotide of, ~~the plant having been transformed with the polynucleotide of~~ claim 127.—

--135. (Currently amended) The transgenic plant of claim 133, which when compared to an isogenic non-transgenic plant, produces an increased ~~a modified~~ level of a polypeptide comprising consecutive amino acids whose sequence is identical to the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 38.—

--137. (Currently amended) A transgenic seed of the plant of claim 133 comprising said polynucleotide.--

Reasons for Allowance

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Claims 117-119, 122-123, 126-127, 129, 131, 133, 135-137, 139 are deemed free of the prior art, given the failure of the prior art to teach or reasonably suggest an isolated polynucleotide of SEQ ID NO:38 encoding SEQ ID NO:12; plant and method of increasing or reducing fiber initiation comprising said isolated polynucleotide.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stuart F. Baum whose telephone number is 571-272-0792. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anne Marie Grunberg can be reached at 571-272-0975. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 571-272-1600.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR

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system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Stuart F. Baum/
Stuart F. Baum Ph.D.
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1638